

Keystone Cage Loop: Blueprint for Future

By JOHN LOTT
Collegian Sports Editor

Picture, if you will, the following scene: It's a Saturday night late in March and Penn State's basketball team trots onto the Rec Hall floor for its biggest game of the season. Spectators virtually hang from the rafters to catch a glimpse of the upcoming action. The reason for the big attraction: the Lions are battling St. Joseph's of Philadelphia for the championship of the Keystone Basketball Conference.

Sound far-fetched? Maybe so, but the idea of a Pennsylvania intercollegiate basketball conference boasts a number of appealing characteristics, especially for an independent university such as Penn State.

Currently there are two basic complaints concerning Penn State's basketball schedule: (1) the Lions play an overabundance of games away from home; and (2) the quality of teams they face ranges from the perennially-powerful Duke, North Carolina State and West Virginia outfits to relative pushovers such as Carnegie Tech, Gettysburg and Bucknell.

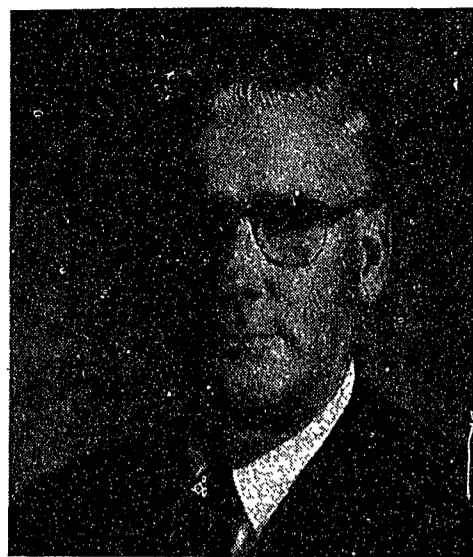
About-Face Sometimes

Admittedly, there have been years when the latter group has stepped out of its soft-touch role (Gettysburg had an outstanding crew three years ago when a pair of hotshots named Ron Warner and Bob Parker were in the lineup). And other seasons have seen the usually-tough teams falter somewhat (West Virginia is only 8-7 this year so far).

The "Keystone Conference" might well include Philadelphia's "Big Five" (Temple, Villanova, LaSalle, St. Joseph's and Penn), plus Penn State, Pitt and Duquesne. There would, of course, still be a number of non-conference contests on the schedule, but the intra-state games would be the main attractions.

Already in MAC

This setup would obviously be of more benefit to the Pitts and Penn States than to the Big Five teams. St. Joseph's, LaSalle and Temple are members of the Middle Atlantic Conference's University division and that,



ERNEST B. MCCOY
... lots of problems

coupled with the traditional intra-city games, has them in an excellent scheduling situation. They don't have to go far to meet good teams.

State, on the other hand, offers a slim list of "big" games on the home slate. This year, for example, the Lions play nine home games. Pitt, Syracuse and West Virginia are the only major attractions on that list.

An intra-state league would, in all probability, have the fans flocking to Rec Hall. A jump or drop in the conference standings could hinge on every game. Each contest would result in more tangible effects besides a win or a loss on the record books.

State coach John Egli said he believes such a setup would prove beneficial to all in-

involved. "We used to play Penn and Temple and some of those others," he said. "I sincerely hope that some day Penn State is a member of a good conference. In a Keystone Conference, I know that in basketball and even wrestling you wouldn't look forward to playing anyone else."

"Most of those good teams put more emphasis on conference games than when they play 'outsiders,'" Egli continued. "Why, in these leagues, you even have teams battling it out for fifth place."

Fan interest would be a major factor. Currently, about the only thing independents like Penn State and Syracuse can work toward is a post-season tournament berth. This often means that end-of-the-season games carry more gravity than mid-campaign contests. This is often true in a league, too, but when a team is gunning for that top spot, the pressure is on from start to finish.

At-Large Bids

An advantage not to be overlooked from the independent's point of view is this: the NCAA awards five post-season "at-large" bids to this district. In a conference, only the winner would get a tournament berth.

"I'd like to see something like this (conference system), and eventually I think it will come about," Ernest B. McCoy, Dean of the College of Health and Physical Education was saying yesterday.

But there are several problems to overcome first.

If intra-state league rivalry should draw the expected attendance, where would all the extra spectators sit in Rec Hall? Even in its remodeled state, State's arena is already too small.

Because students don't have to pay admission to sports events, and because students compose the majority of the audience, all Penn State winter sports operate "in the red." Football receipts support the rest of the athletic program. And when big name schools bring teams to your gym, you have to make it worth their while financially. That's why State can't



JOHN EGLI
... likes idea

afford to bring Dukes and Kansas States into Rec Hall. Dollars, as McCoy was saying yesterday, are mighty hard to come by.

As long as students don't pay admission, and as long as State doesn't have a large field house which would allow increased attendance from the general public, the situation here will remain static.

McCoy is adamant about maintaining that first policy. He said he won't make students pay their way to see their own team play, as is the case in some Big Ten universities.

Students First

"We only put 200 tickets on sale to the public for home basketball," he said. "After they're gone, we close up shop. The students come first."

But there is a possible remedy to the second problem, that of a bigger arena. A giant field house is on the campus blueprints already. It's slated to be built near the ice Pavilion-Nittany dorm area. Completion date for the proposed 12,000-seat building is 1970.

But once again, accumulating the necessary dollars is the big problem. One way to lighten the University's big basketball dollars deficit is to play on the road, where the visiting school is guaranteed a certain lump sum before it leaves campus. This is one reason the Lions played nine of their first 10 games away from home this season.

There is another valid reason, one on which both McCoy and Egli agree.

"Personally, I think we're very fortunate," Egli said. "We have a term break about the time the season opens. Why play ball games at home when the students aren't here? We used to play some games here in December and they wouldn't even bother to put the bleachers on the floor. It was like playing in a funeral parlor. Why not play on the road where you can make some money?"

Everything Helps

McCoy added that every little bit picked up in away basketball guarantees helps lessen the share football must contribute to this deficit. And football pays for nearly everything already.

McCoy cited an example of the bowling alleys in the basement of the original Rec Hall building. These lanes, he said, were built with \$100,000 in television money from a bowl game. The same receipts paid for the four lanes in White Hall.

Tennis courts, such as the ones built in the East Halls area last year, also are financed with athletic department, i.e., football, funds.

The day may come when Penn State basketball team is a full-fledged conference member, intra-state or otherwise. But it won't happen until a larger arena is a reality instead of a blueprint. And when it does, there's one thing you can bet on. Students won't have to pay their way in to the games.

Culhane Goes All-Around

Lineup 'Problems' Facing Gymnasts for Pitt Contest

By STAN RATNER

Although this should not be construed as overconfidence or bragging on his part, Penn State's gymnastics coach Gene Wettstone yesterday said he was having three problems in preparing for tomorrow's meet with the University of Pittsburgh,

Weber Tops In Bowling Tourney

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — Dick Weber, two-time former champion from St. Louis, won five of his first six games in the second day of finals at the \$100,000 All-Star Bowling Tournament yesterday to take command of the American Division.

Weber got off to a brilliant start, sweeping his seventh round duel with former titlist Bill Welu of St. Louis with a big 228-255-483 series. He shot 247-238-485 in the eighth round to win two more games from Bill Hoppe of Lincoln, Neb., who had 216-232-448.

Weber split his ninth round match with his old teammate and doubles partner, Ray Bluth of St. Louis, with a 424 series.

Weber's 12-6 won-loss record and his total pinfall of 3,999 gave him a gross total of 4,599. Under the bonus system a bowler receives 50 pins extra for every game he wins. Tommy Tuttle of King, N.C., runner-up in the 1964 All-Star, was in second place with a 4,404 total. Jerry McClary of Denver, who led the division Wednesday night, dropped to third place with 4,395.

Ted Hoffman Jr., of Plymouth Meeting, Pa., dominated the National Division at midday with an 11-7 record and a total pinfall of 3,864. His gross total is 4,414.

Hoffman made his big move in the eighth round when he pounded out a 247-256-505 series to take two straight from Carmen Salvino of Chicago.

Don Daugherty of Clearwater, Fla., the leader Wednesday night, dropped to second place with a 4,364 total. Daugherty's worst slip came in the eighth round when Harry Smith of Boston beat him twice with a 211-216-427 series.

Jean Winsch, the blonde mother of two from South Bend, Ind., who won the qualifying trophy, led the women's American Division after the seventh round with a 9-5 record and a 2,765 pinfall. Mrs. Winsch split her sixth round skirmish with Jean Havlish of St. Paul, Minn., but knocked Mary Louise Young out of first place when she beat the Houston blonde two straight with a 201-215-416 series.

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and none of them had anything to do with Pitt itself.

First of all, Wettstone wants to give as many of his younger, inexperienced gymnasts as much dual meet competition as possible. But he also has to make sure that his regulars, whom he will be relying on heavily later in the season and in the Nationals, don't become stale. But then again, he does have to rest some of his starters who have been seeing a great deal of action lately, in particular Ed Isabelle.

Despite all these "problems," the Lions are 4-0 and leading the EIGL. The nearest contender is Syracuse, currently 2-0. No other EIGL teams are still unbeaten.

Culhane in All-Around
One thing is certain: Jim Culhane, who worked the all-around against Navy Wednesday, will again be the all-around performer. This marks the first time this year one Lion has performed the all-around twice, let alone in two successive meets.

Culhane, who had seen relatively little action until meeting the Middies, turned in good performances on three events and mediocre performances on the other three.

Wettstone was pleased with his high bar, parallel bar and long horse routines, but thinks the Rochester, N.Y., senior could improve in the floor exercise, still rings and side horse.

Wettstone will also start the same three men in the trampoline: Tony Watson, co-captain Pete Saponaro and Gene Secor. Particular emphasis will be placed on the performances of the former two, who will be attempting new and more difficult routines against the Panthers.

Difficult Tramp Routines
Watson's opening sequence will be his most difficult part, where he will be attempting three back twists and a somersault. Saponaro will be doing a 2½ back somersault to a double Cody. In layman's parlance that means he will be following the somersault with a landing on his stomach to another two back somersaults.

In the free exercise, Saponaro and Steve Cohen, one of the four Lion regulars who missed the Navy meet, will join Culhane to form the starting threesome.

Dennis Paoletti will join Cohen and Culhane in the side horse, n the rings, John Martin, Bill Jenkins and Culhane will be starting. As for the other events, Wettstone has, as yet, not decided.

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Egli Cautions Cagers Against Pitt Letdown

Penn State basketball coach John Egli is hoping his Nittany Lions can prevent lightning from striking for the fourth time tomorrow night.

The Lions dropped the Pitt Panthers tomorrow at 8 p.m., and the word from Pitt coach Bob Timmons is that his outfit doesn't stand much of a chance. Timmons said he believed his team can stay with State in the running and shooting departments, so he plans to have the Panthers hold the ball. Egli was saying last night that regardless of Timmons' pessimistic attitude, he's worried about tomorrow's game. One reason is this: three of the last four of State's losses have come after dramatic upset victories.

It started last season when

the Lions dropped West Virginia, 86-76, in Rec Hall, only to fall victim to Army, 46-37, in their next outing. That was State's final loss en route to a 16-7 season.

During State's elongated road trip in December of this season, the Temple game was the big one the Lions were pointing for. So what happened? They ripped the Owls, 73-63, at the Patrastra, only to lose to a tough NYU outfit the next night.

Then, after winning the Detroit Motor City Classic, the Nittanians traveled to Duke and absorbed the soundest whipping of the season to the tune of 121-88.

So Egli is cautioning his outfit against a letdown against Pitt, mainly because the players are coming off another "big" victory. That (Continued on page six)

Ragan Tied for 1st In Crosby Classic

PEBBLE BEACH, Calif. (AP) — Dave Ragan deftly putter an elderly, pawnshop putter yesterday to dentuck with veteran Doug Ford for the first round lead in the \$84,500 Bing Crosby Golf Tournament as each fired a sub-par 66.

Playing the rugged Cypress Point course, Ragan carded seven birdies with putts ranging up to 35 feet. The 29-year-old from Orlando, Fla., used a wooden shaft club he was given last week by a friend who bought it in a pawnshop a quarter century ago.

Since he hasn't won a tourney since 1962 nor any money this year, Ragan figured the old putter might change his fortunes.

Ford scored four straight birdies, from the second through fifth holes of the Monterey Peninsula Country Club's shore course, and added his final birdie on the 14th with a 12-footer.

Pebble Beach, the third course played, proved tougher than the others yesterday.

Each of the three courses is played once by each golfer during the first three days of competition with finals Sunday at Pebble Beach.

Since Cypress plays to a par 72 and Monterey Peninsula to a

71, Ragan was six under regulation figures.

That left them one stroke ahead of Texan Don January, who toured Cypress in a five-under 67. Skee Ri of Jamison, Pa., fashioned a 68 at Monterey.

Among the late finishers were Jack Nicklaus, who celebrated his 25th birthday with a 72 and Arnold Palmer, who shot a 73. Like most of the big name golfers, both played Cypress Point where galleries of 10,000 watched. U.S. Open champion Ken Venturi soared to an 81 there.

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